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SOURCE Sopuk Sinmun.

DISCUSS SOVIET CONTROL IN NORTH KOREA

WORKERS' WELFARE SACRIFICED FOR HIGHER PRODUCTION -- Sopuk Sinmun, 15 Apr 50

Since production increase orders were issued by the puppet government in the North Korean People's Republic, the welfare of the workers has been completely sacrificed for higher production in all industries. The production policy at the Sadong Coal Mine near P'yongyang, and the Pongsan Coal Mine in Hwanghae Do, for example, is shockingly inhuman. The miners are forced to work 4 to 5 hours of overtime daily in addition to the regular 12 hours of work, for which they get only 20 to 30 won per day. Such meager wages are barely enough to support a semi-slave standard of living.

In addition, the working conditions in the mines are inhuman. Inadequate facilities frequently cause collapse of pits, among many other kinds of disasters. On 23 February 1950, about 65 miners died at Pongsan mine when a pit collapsed and entombed the workers.

Even without such disasters, the mortality rate is high among the miners, since sick and injured workers are left untreated in many cases due to the acute shortage of medical facilities and drugs. All efforts and available resources are concentrated solely for the purpose of production increase at all times.

SOVIET-CONTROLLED COMPANY RULES NORTH KOREAN SEA -- Sopuk Sinmun, 15 Apr 50

The Choso (Korean-Soviet) Marine Transportation Company of North Korea, which rules the entire North Korean waters, is a Soviet controlled company. Ostensibly it is a joint operation by the USSR and the People's Republic. Although the head of the company is a Korean, he has no control of the company. The company actually is run by Russians and second-generation Korean Communists born in the USSR.

The company handles shipments of goods taken from North Korea to the USSR, which constitute 60 percent of its business; its trade with Hong Kong amounts to about 20 percent; and shipping services for the Chinese Eighth Route Army constitute the remaining 20 percent of its business.

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The company controls about 70 percent of all the vessels in North Korea, and through its branch offices in all the major ports, virtually commands all of North Korea's sea transportation.

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